

# **BEST PRACTICES FOR IOWA'S HOMELESSNESS SYSTEM**

---

Iowa Council on Homelessness

Standards for Quality Programs

Presentation to the Council – May 16, 2014

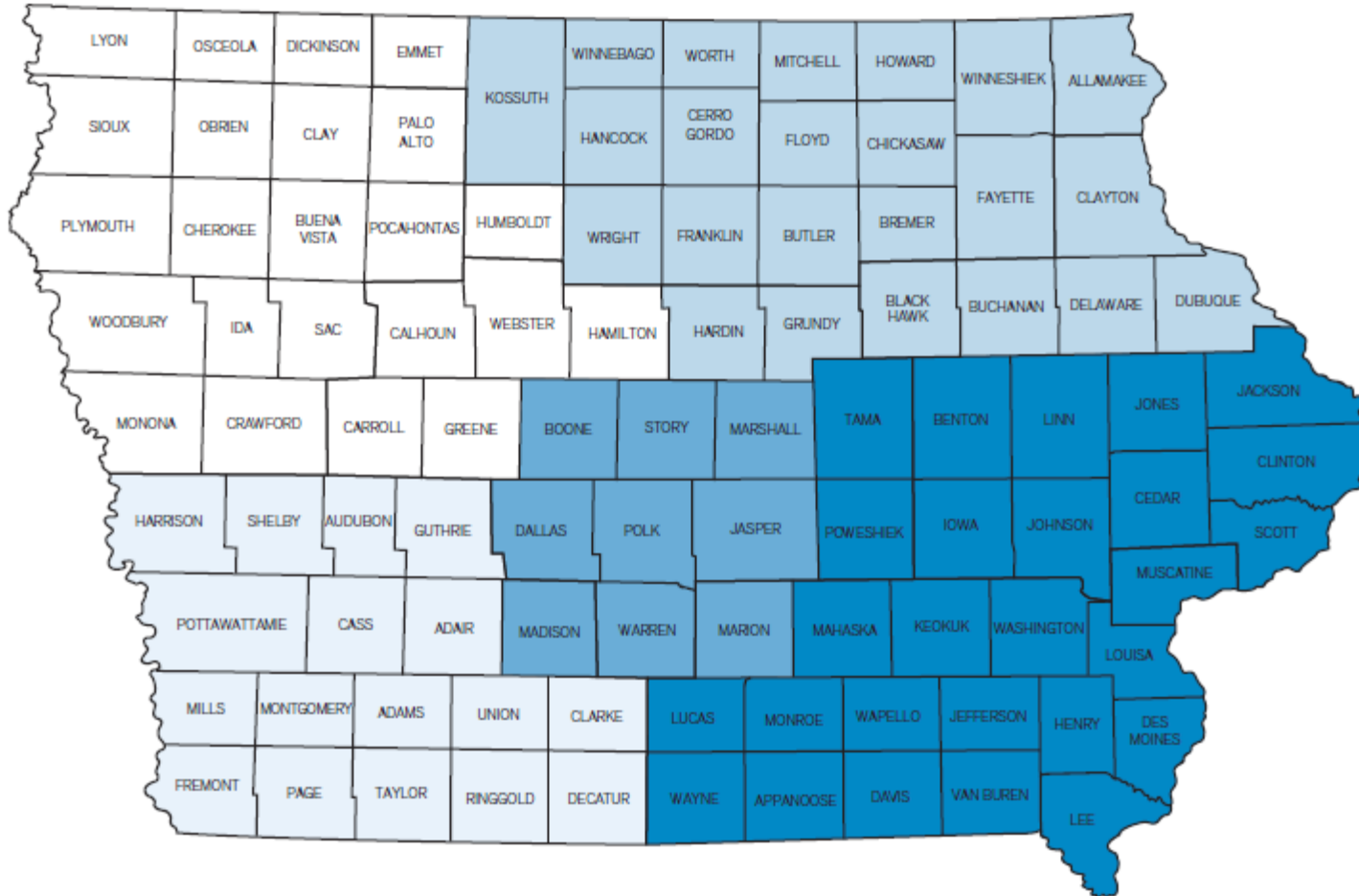
# Process and Timeline

- Introductory Webinar – November 2013
- Statewide Outreach – December 2013
- State Planning Advisory Committee – January – April 2014
- Deliverables – December 2013 – May 2014
  - Outreach Summary
  - Recommended Standards for Homelessness Programs
    - Operations, Services, Performance
  - Strategy for implementing tracking of performance standards

# State Planning Advisory Committee Process and Deliberations

- Committee of hands-on stakeholders
- Diversity in program type and geography
- Four day-long in-person meetings
- Work between sessions
- Started with inputs from outreach meetings
- Engaged others statewide through a questionnaire “test” of representative standards”
- Consensus recommended standards

# Regions of Natural Affinity



# Charge to the Advisory Committee

- The State Planning Advisory Committee will recommend standards for outreach programs, emergency shelters, transitional housing, and permanent housing (including permanent supportive housing, rapid rehousing, homelessness prevention, and Housing First). Standards will cover:
  - Performance
  - Service
  - Operations

# Definition of Standard

- “Standard” is an element of a homelessness program’s performance, service, or operations that is necessary for a quality program and meets, at minimum, funder requirements.

# How Were Standards Identified?

- Findings of outreach meeting discussions and SWOT exercises
- Identified additional areas to be considered
- Re-framed, grouped, and listed topical range of standards, e.g. human resources, training, Board structure
- Turned the list into draft standards
- Reviewed and refined
- Consensus agreement on the set of standards

# Questionnaire for Statewide Stakeholders

- To keep stakeholders informed of this initiative
- To assist the Advisory Committee understand the current status of programs in areas related to proposed standards
- To allow programs to “try on” the standards in their own programs and provide feedback



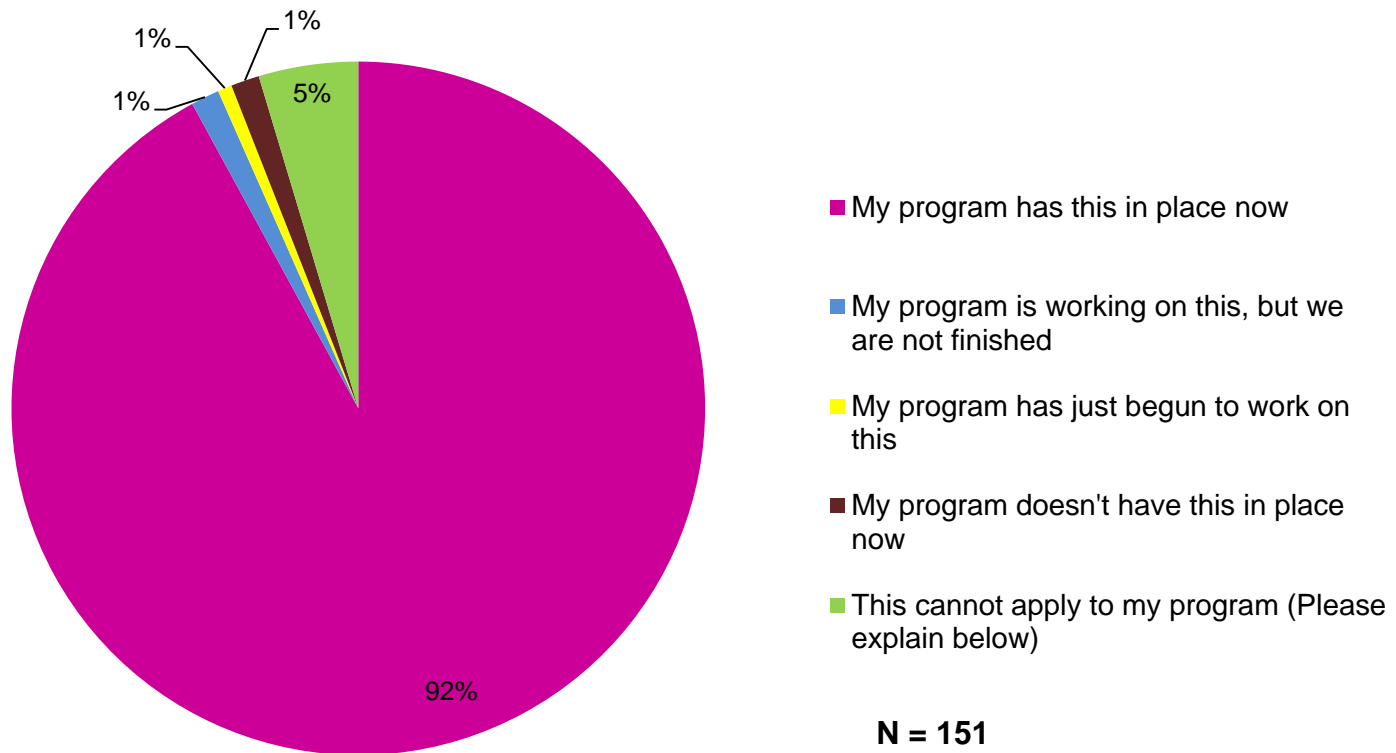
# Homelessness Standards Program Questionnaire Responses

- Distributed to housing-focused organizations
- Includes representative examples from complete set of recommended standards
- Response N=151
- Responses gathered in April 2014
- NOTE: Some standards were revised after this questionnaire; a standard printed in the final report may be somewhat different.

# Services Standards

An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...

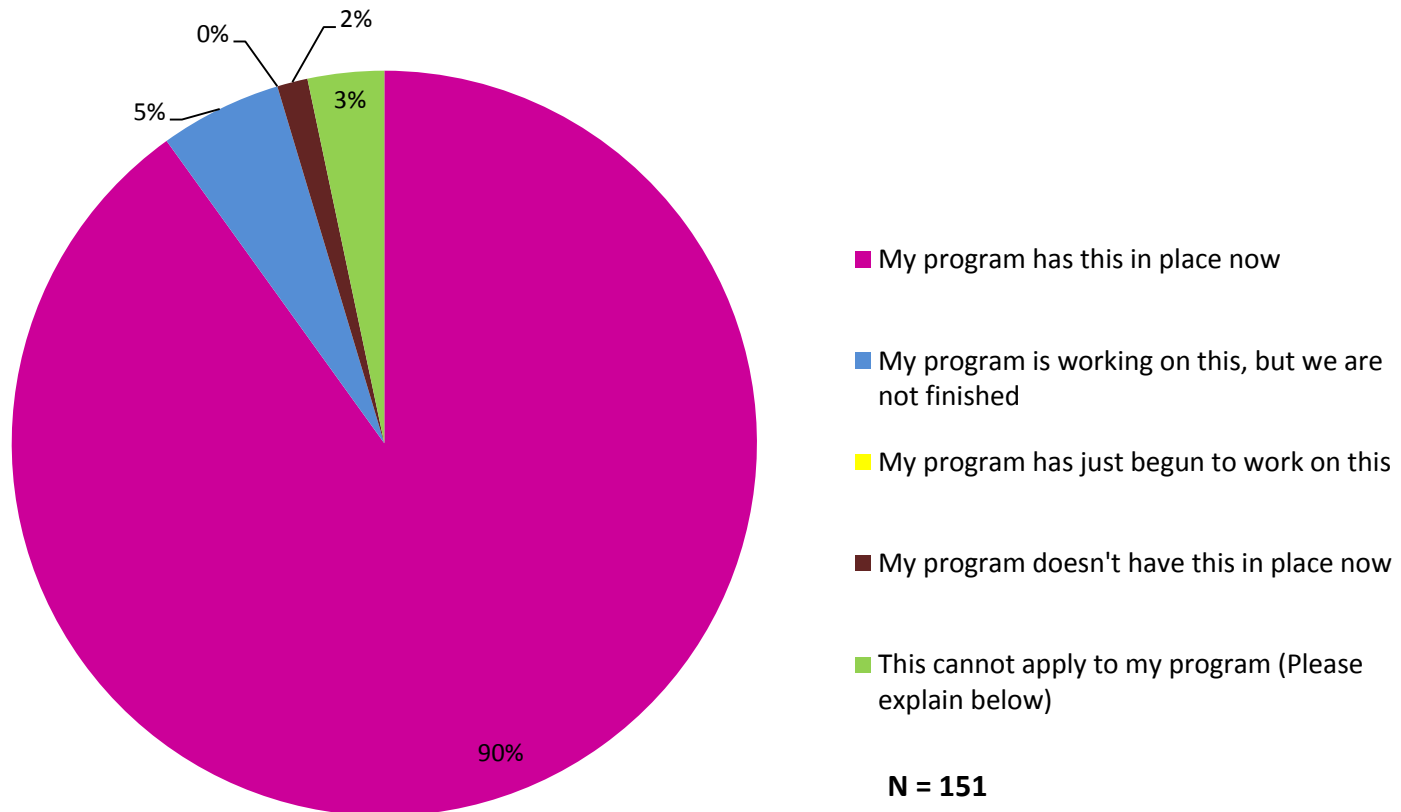
1. have regular, published and consistent hours of operation and/or a reliable point of contact.



# Services Standards

An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...

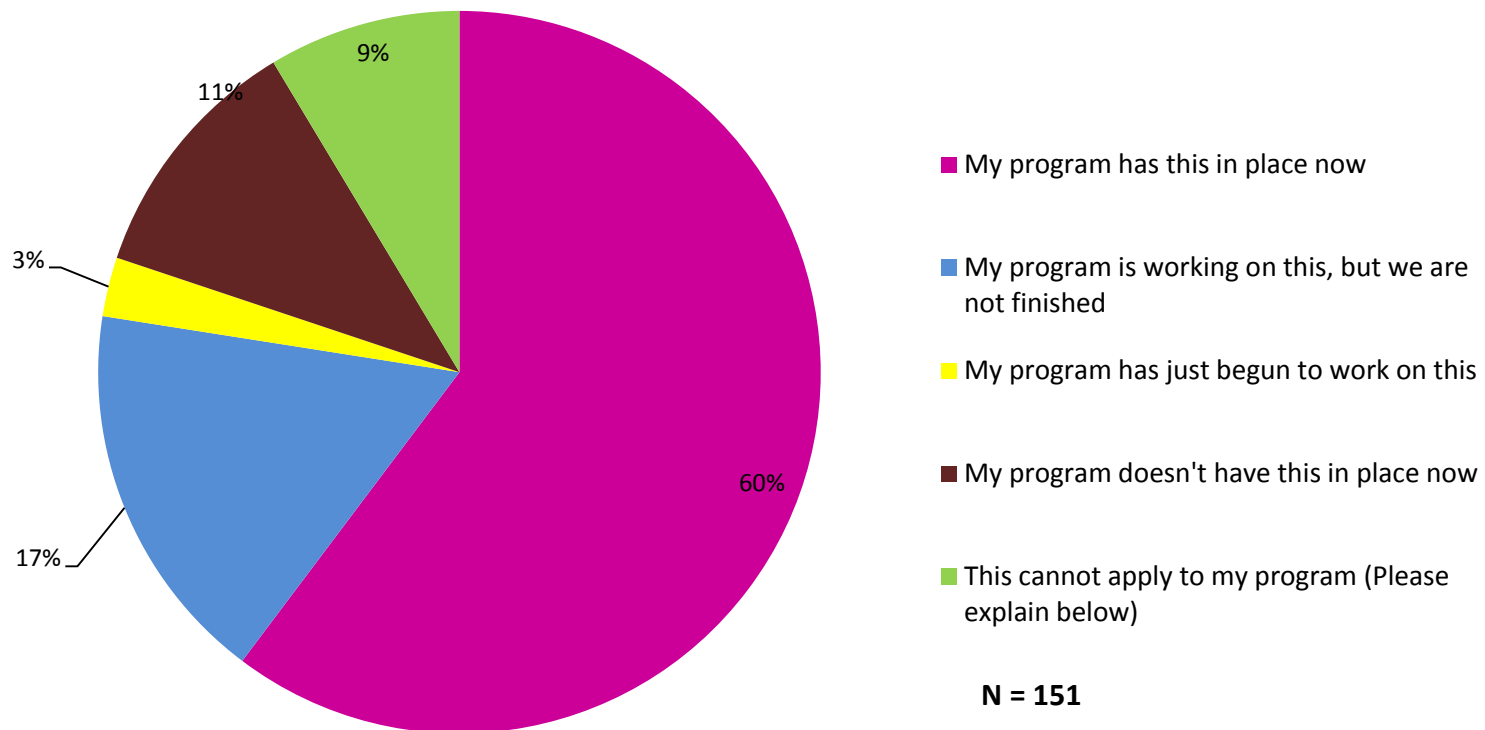
## 2. clearly identify the services provided and the populations served.



# Services Standards

An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...

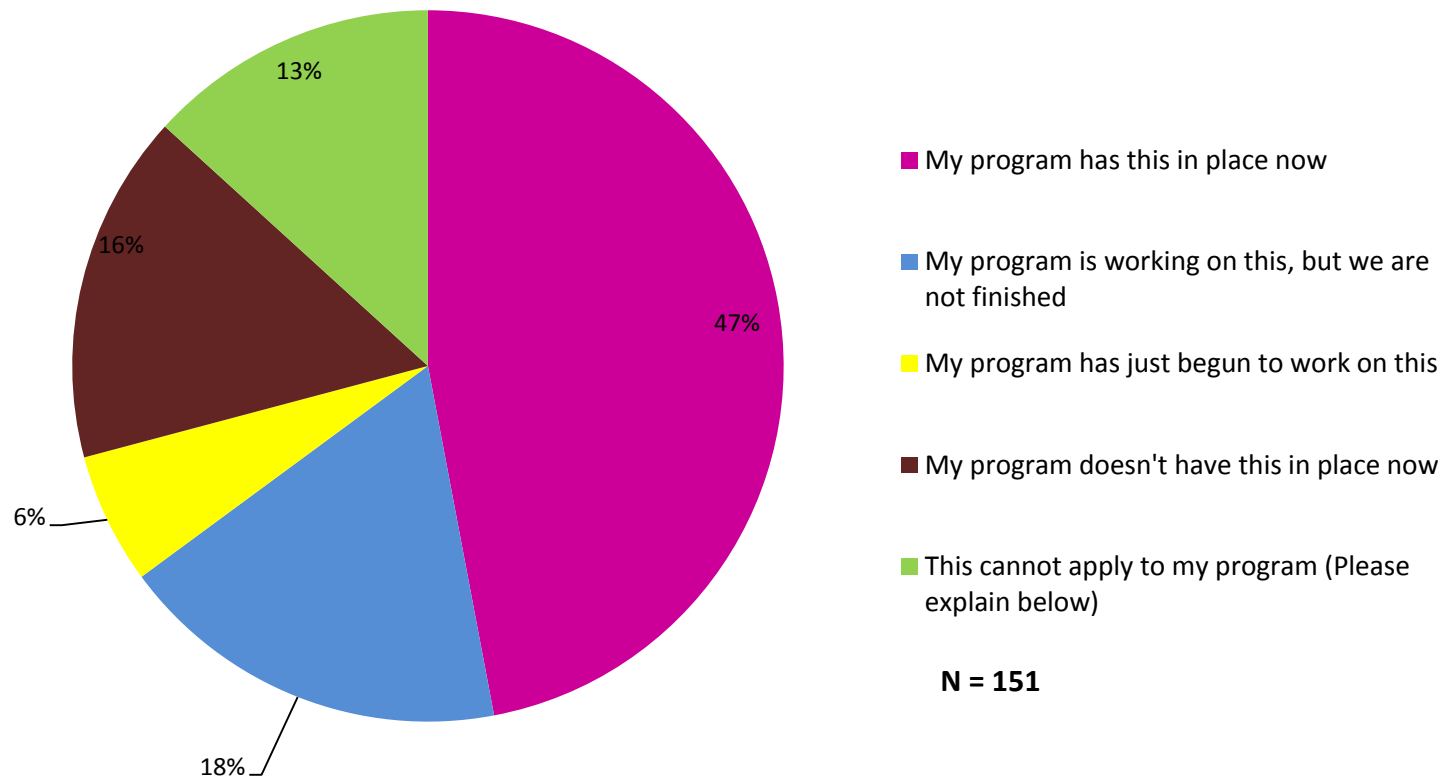
3. have written and publicly-available policy describing how assistance is prioritized within each program.



# Services Standards

An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...

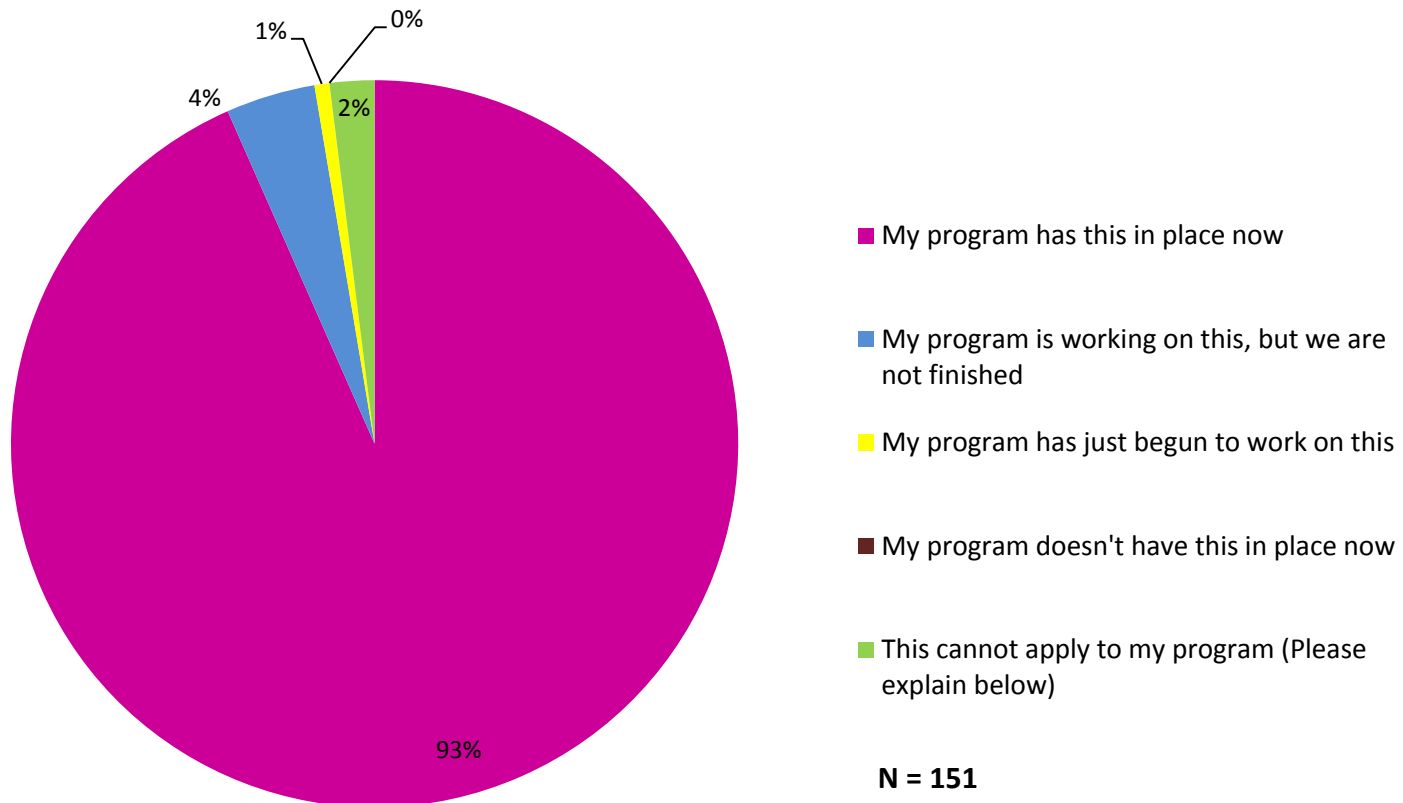
## 4. participate in the coordinated intake approved by the local Continuum of Care.



# Services Standards

An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...

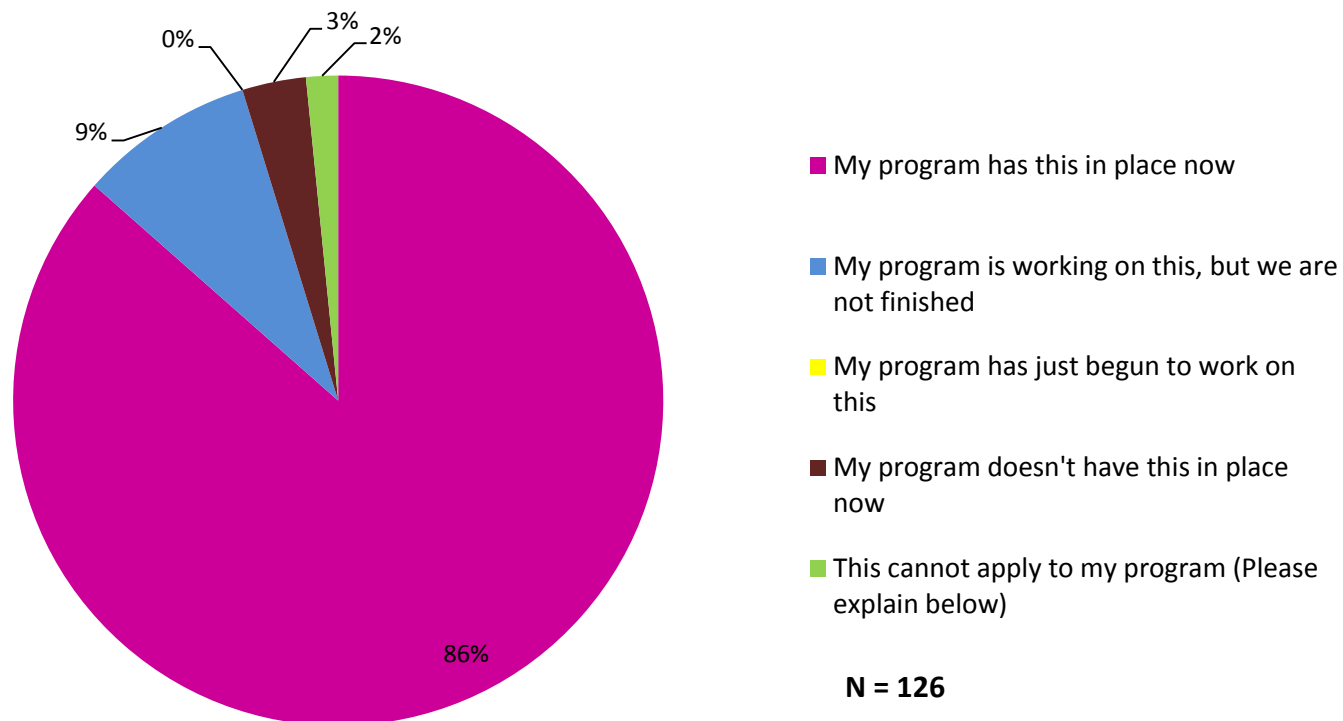
**5. work formally and informally with other community resources, agencies, and networks to appropriately coordinate services and/or refer a client.**



# Operations Standards

An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...

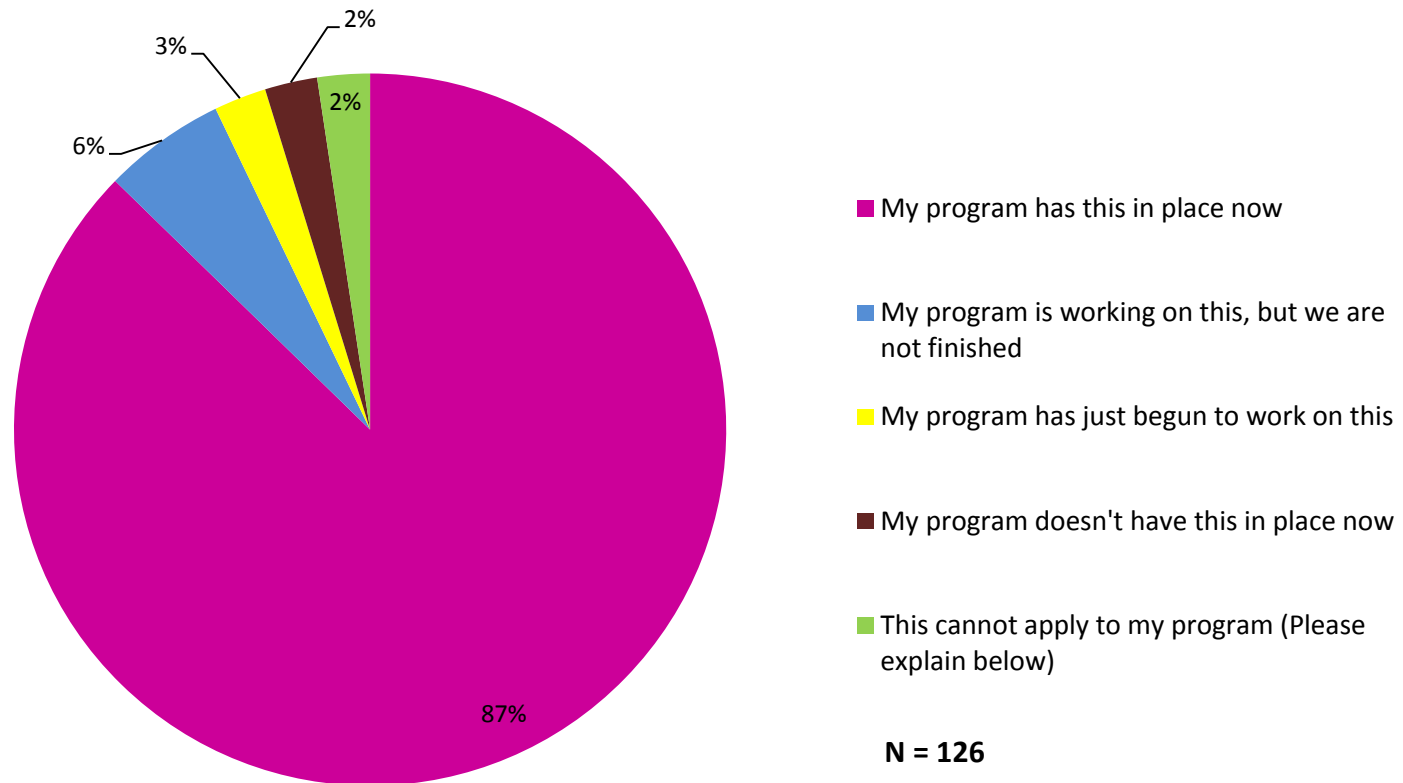
**2. have written financial policies and procedures. This includes the following:  
demonstrate compliance with grant requirements, if applicable; track matched and  
leveraged funds, if applicable; have written procedures in place for document  
retention based**



# Operations Standards

An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...

**3. have a written employee manual or personnel policy and procedure manual. The manual should include, at minimum: a conflict of interest policy that applies to Board of Directors, staff, and volunteers; and a written policy for confidentiality and inform**

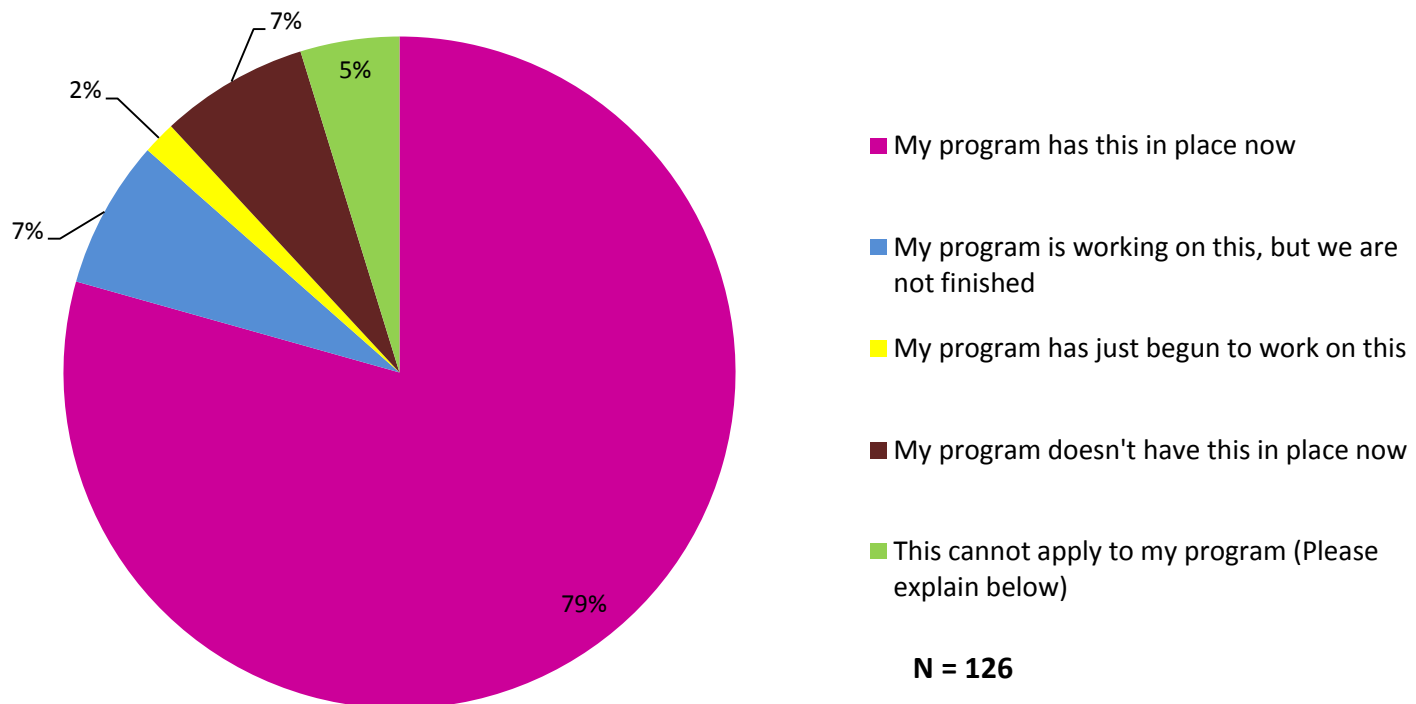




# Operations Standards

An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...

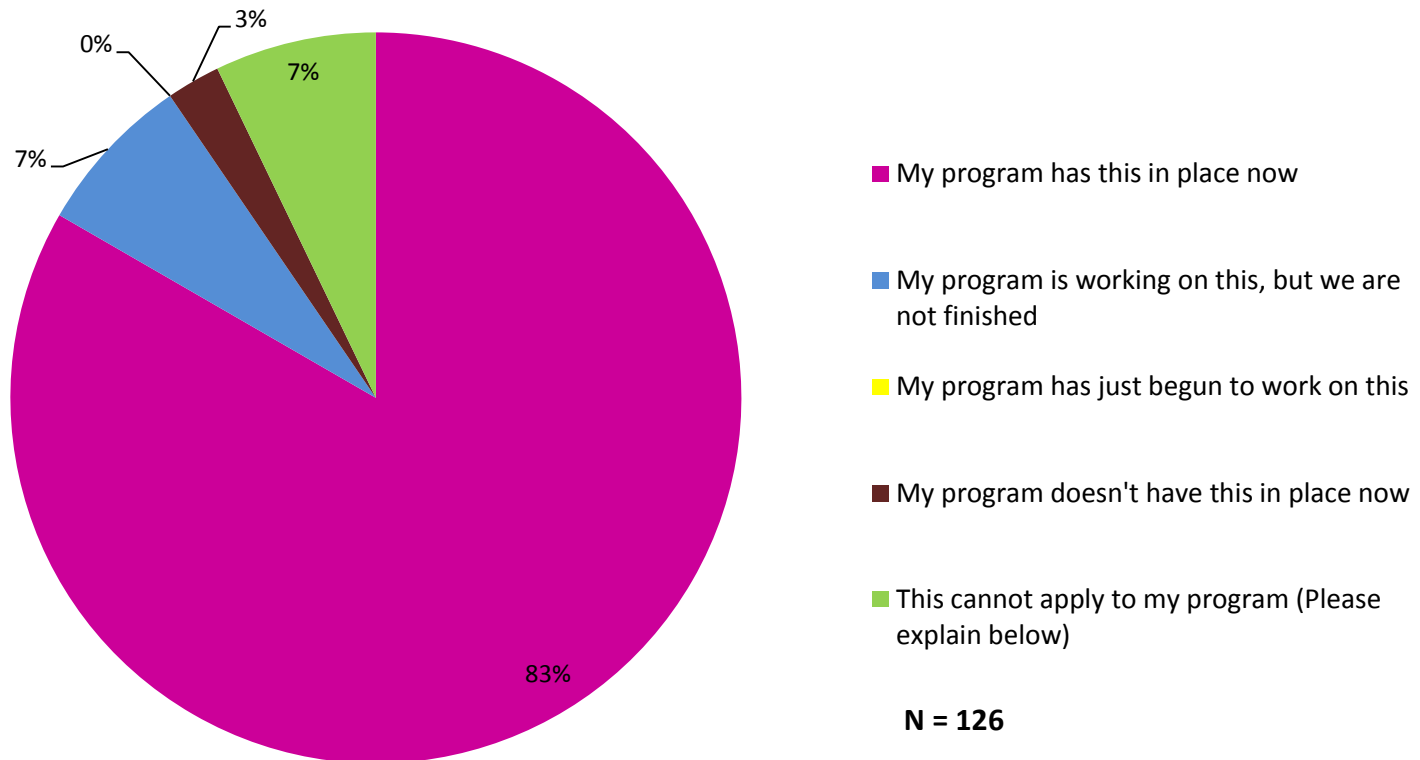
**5. complete background checks including criminal history, child abuse, dependent-adult abuse, ad sex offender registry for all employees and volunteers who provide direct services.**



# Operations Standards

An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...

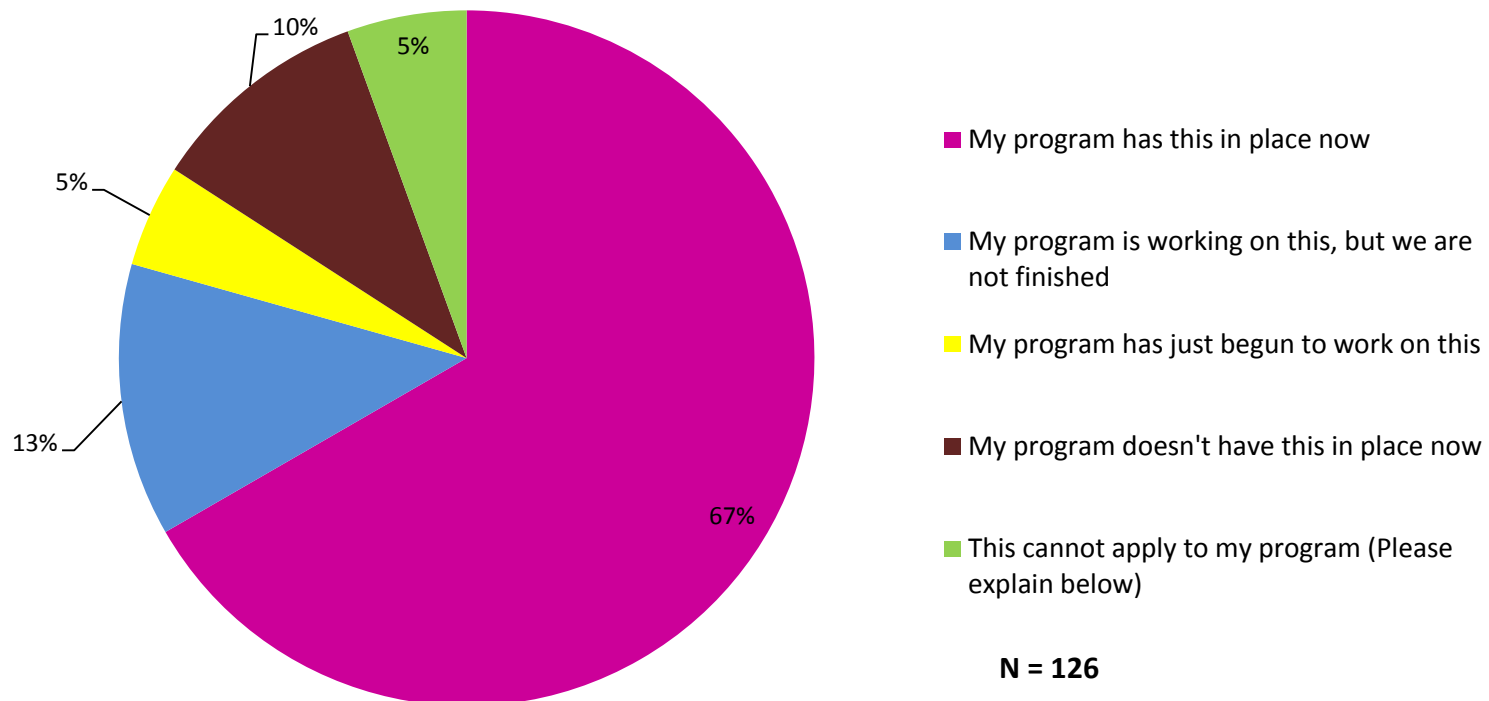
6. have written, determined minimum staffing requirements that are appropriate for the type of program and ensure a safe environment. In an emergency shelter, at minimum, one qualified staff person should be present during hours of operation. For other pr



# Operations Standards

An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...

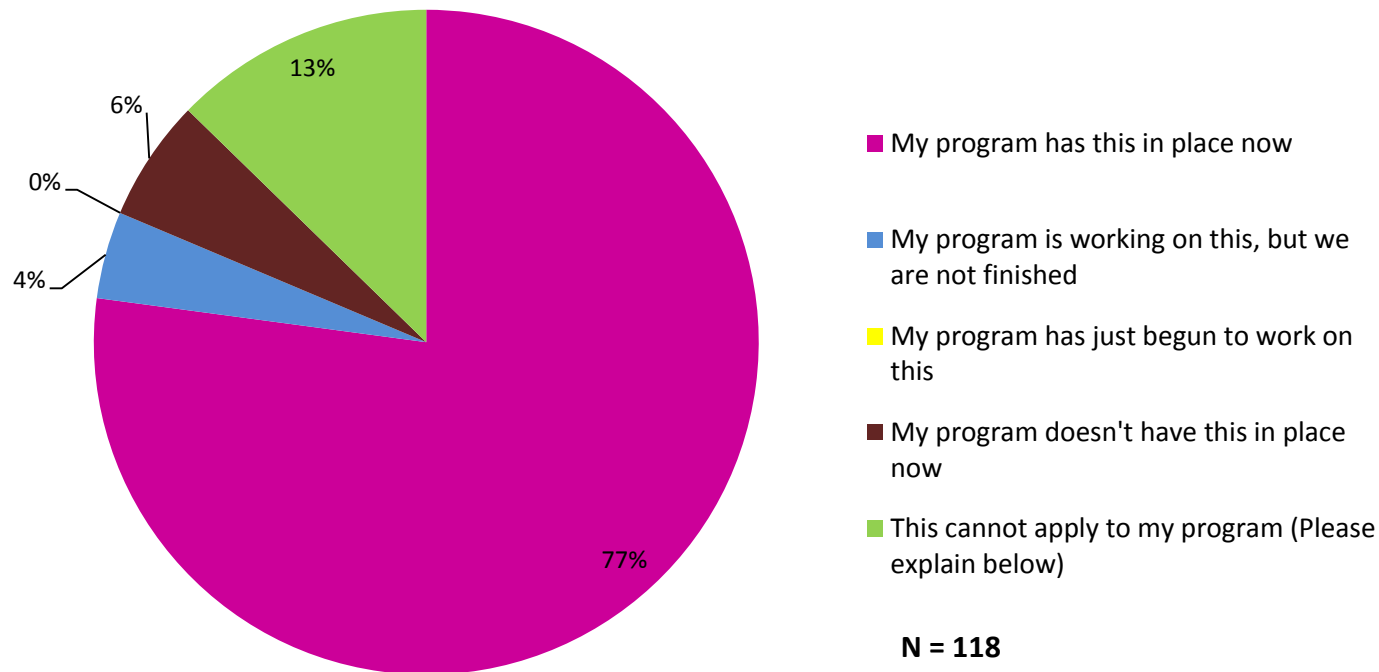
**7. provide training, at minimum, for all staff and for volunteers who provide direct services, in the following topics: safety; ethics; confidentiality; First Aid (includes blood-borne pathogens), CPR, and AED training, if applicable; and required OSHA tr**



# Performance Standards

This standard applies to Outreach, Prevention, Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing, Rapid Rehousing, and Housing First. An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...

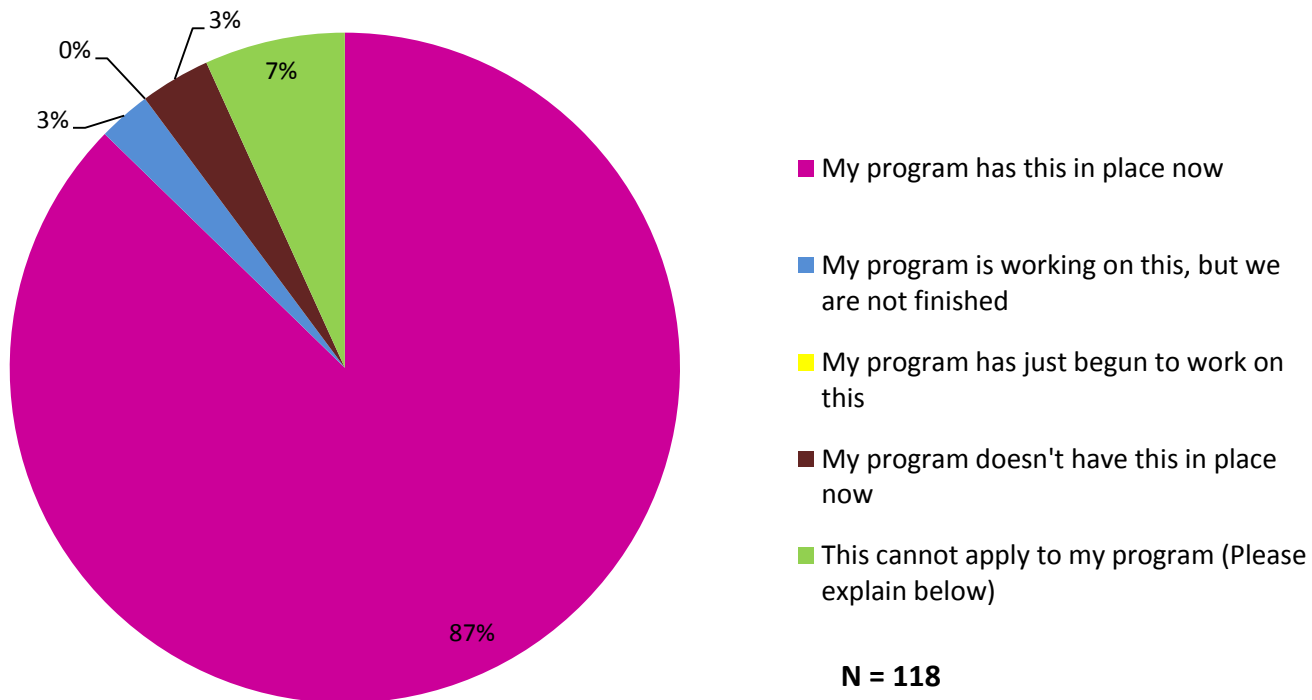
1. ensure that clients have the opportunity to choose to be off the street.



# Performance Standards

This standard applies to Outreach, Prevention, Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing, Rapid Rehousing, and Housing First. An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...

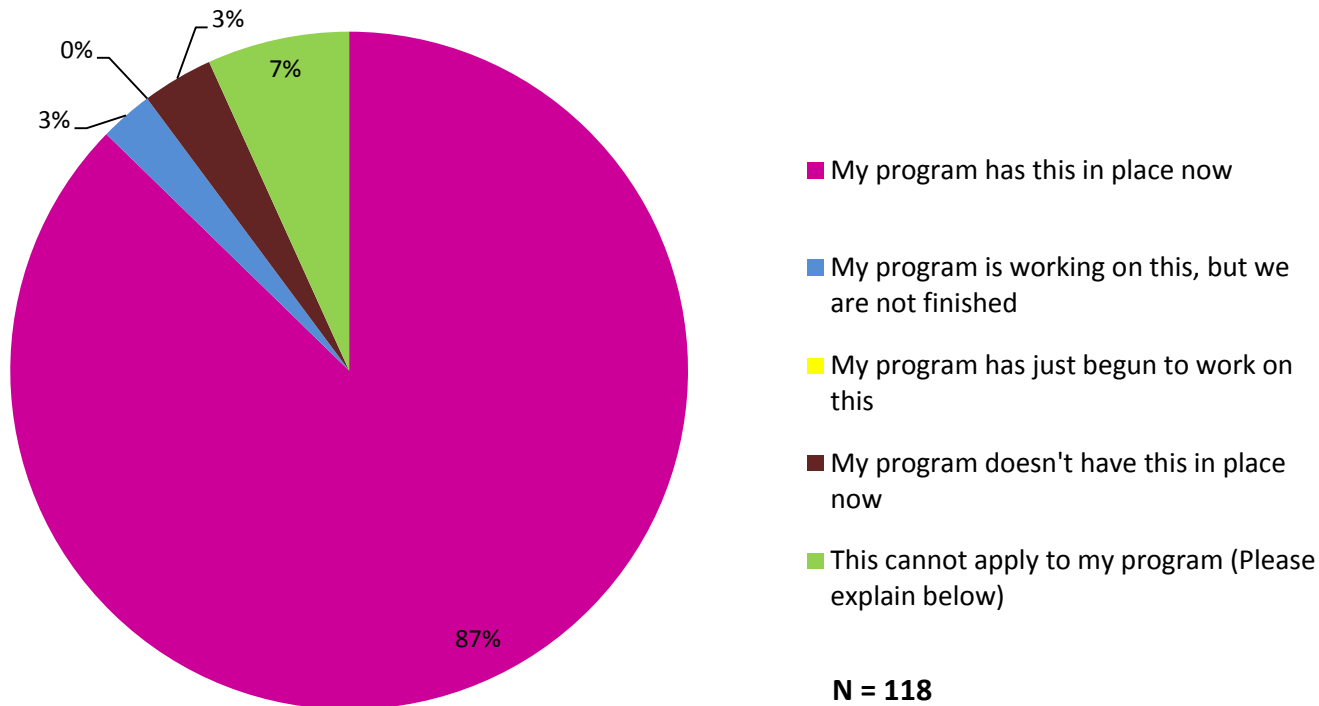
**2. ensure that clients have basic needs met,  
e.g. food, shelter, clothing, safety.**



# Performance Standards

This standard applies to Outreach, Prevention, Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing, Rapid Rehousing, and Housing First. An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...

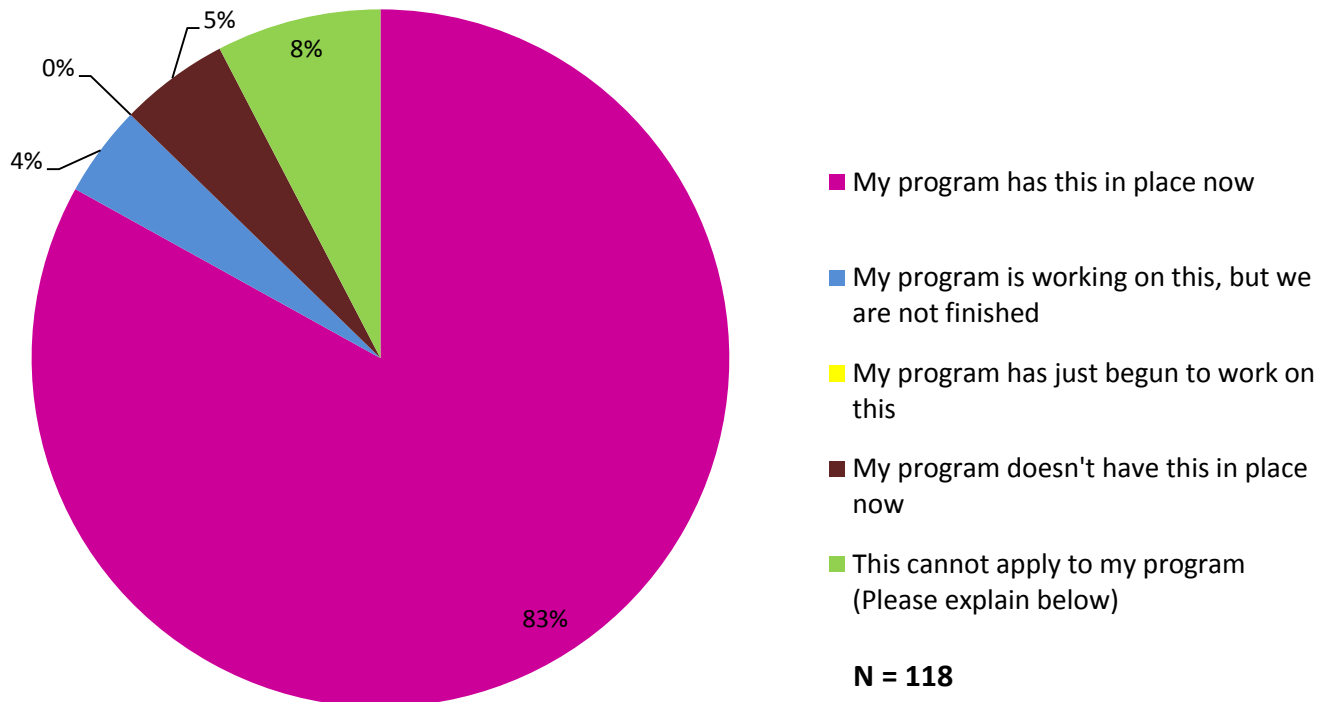
## 3. ensure that clients have the opportunity to connect with mainstream resources.



# Performance Standards

**This standard applies to Prevention, Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing, Rapid Rehousing, and Housing First. It does not apply to Outreach. An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...**

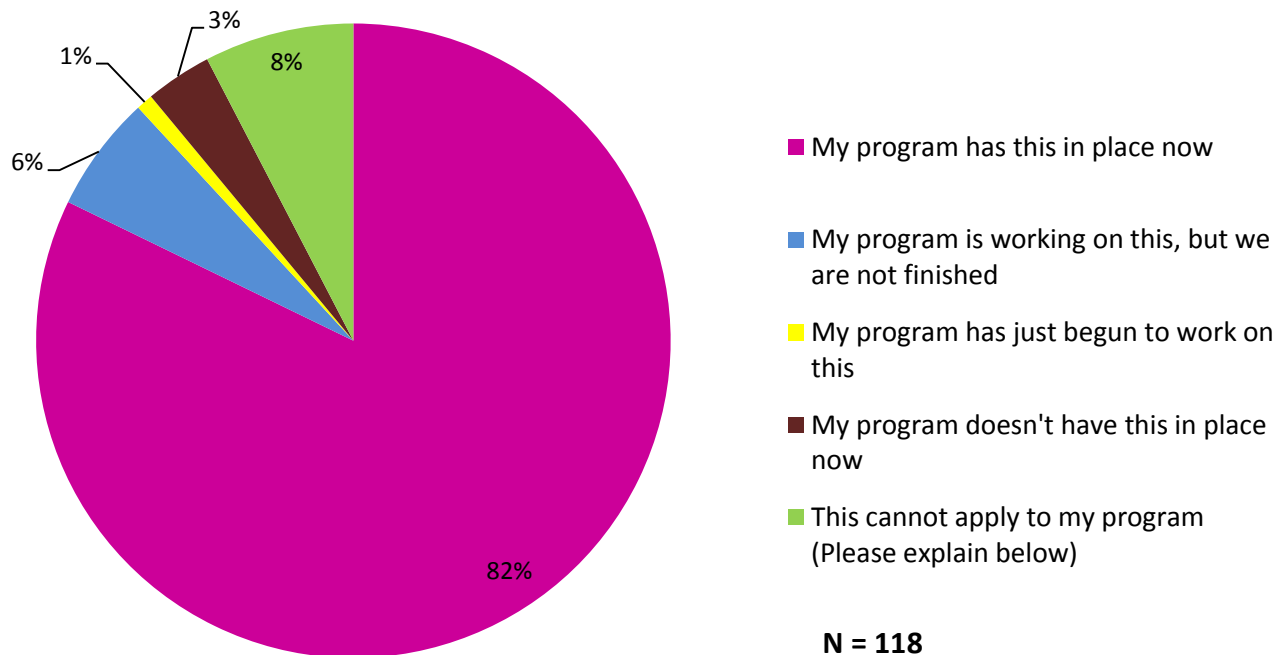
## **6. support clients in their progress toward identified goals.**



# Performance Standards

This standard applies to Prevention, Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, Permanent Supportive Housing, Rapid Rehousing, and Housing First. It does not apply to Outreach. An organization providing services to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness should...

## 8. support clients in achieving financial stability and long-term, safe housing.





# Next Steps

- Finalize strategy for implementation of tracking of performance standards
- Continue engagement of stakeholders at June 5 Peer-to-Peer Homelessness Symposium
- Work as requested to provide additional information to the Council as it considers the Recommended Standards.

# QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

---